

***Mission Statement: To support and challenge all students to achieve personal and academic excellence in a student-centered environment.***

**BERLIN-BOYLSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Saturday, March 18, 2023

1:00 p.m.

Tahanto Regional Middle High School

Multi-Purpose Room

1001 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505

**Present:**

**School Committee:** Mr. Michael Totman, Chair; Mrs. Meagan Grill, Vice Chair; Mrs. Lori-Anne Hart, District Clerk; Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti; Mrs. Julie Lee; Mrs. Lisa Mair

**Administration:** Ms. Carol Costello, Acting-Superintendent; Mrs. Nancy Konisky, Director of Finance & Operations; Mrs. Janell Fitzpatrick, Director of Pupil Personnel; Mr. Daniel Ayala, Director of Facilities; Mr. Paul Mara, Director of Technology; Mr. John Campbell, Berlin Memorial Principal; Mrs. Dawn-Marie Ayles, Interim Boylston Elementary Principal,

*(Open Meeting Minutes taken by Lori-Anne Hart, District Clerk)*

I. Call to Order at 1:15pm

II. No Public Comments

III. **Consent Agenda-Vote**

**Mrs. Lee made a motion to approve consent agenda as presented, Mrs. Degliaberti seconded.**

**Vote: 6-0, Motion Passes.**

IV. No Communications

*Mr. Totman addresses the audience (teachers, parents, selectboard & finance committee members, etc), thanking them for attending and thanking Ms. Costello, Mrs. Konisky, Mrs. Grill, and Mrs. Lee for the very long hours they put into the 2023-24 budget.*

*He explains Budget Process, noting that next year the school committee will invite select boards and finance committees to attend meetings on budget so that it is a **collaborative** effort.*

V. **Reports**

Superintendent of Schools-*Ms. Carol Costello.*

Director of Finance and Operations-*Ms. Nancy Konisky*

● FY2024 Budget Presentation

- Ms. Costello explains that she supports level budget, noting that original budget was based on a 3-year District Improvement Plan. Due to costly inflation and with 2 more years to meet the needs of the district, she is asking for level funding.

■ Ms. Costello appreciates the good that has come out of such a bold budget:

- Budget talks with towns will be collaborative and will start earlier.

- BBRSD Capital Plans are being supported.
- Parents & Community members are being supportive with presence as well as providing resources/ideas for funding in other ways.
- A level budget is a 16% increase; if towns give traditional 5-6% increase, we will lose significant number of staff
- School Committee votes on final budget, but the level budget is the “Carol Costello Budget” for this year.
- Thanks School Committee and towns for their support, for working together to support our children.
- Mrs. Konisky explains that the Budget has changed since December due to unexpected increase in costs as well as new Special Education needs.
- Budget presentation is discussed slide by slide.
  - This includes proposed cuts, obstacles to meeting goals, impact of non-negotiable Special Education, Revenue Summary with level service, funding school receives, circuit breaker along with explanation as to why there is always a balance carried over each year, history of Special Education, School Choice/revolving accounts, Capital Requests, spending per pupil at each school, Local Contributions, Out of District/enrollment history, class sizes,
  - Members ask questions about particular slides with answers/input from Ms. Konisky, school administrators, and Mrs. Fitzpatrick

*Mr. Totman invites the public to comment:*

*Leslie Graham, Boylston: works in corporate world, suggests benchmarking against surrounding towns/competitors: where do we stand in comparison when it comes to class sizes, etc.*

*Gerry Quam, Boylston: would double the budget as the return is two-fold, thanked school committee & administration for time & unwavering commitment to our schools and students.*

*Olivia Jones, Boylston: Educator and recent resident who moved from district with 20,000+ students, concerned regarding discrepancy between out of district cost compared to in-district costs and also feels extra nurse is critical. While a new resident, not sure she wants to stay given town’s inability to give her children what they need.*

*Matthew Mecum, Boylston (Select Board Member): Encourages all to send letters regarding more special education funding to state representatives, the Budget is a 3 year plan and some funding may come from other businesses in town which could free up funds, reminds that it is not as simple as how much to raise taxes.*

*Kyle Burns (Berlin LINK) & Jackie Hoffses (Boylston PTO): sending out a district-wide letter with templates for families to contact their representatives*

*Christine Medeiros, Boylston (PTO): Reminds committee to go for what is needed as once on the town floor, the budget can only be decreased, suggests leaving a buffer.*

## **VI. Business Items**

**Mrs. Grill makes a motion to accept FY2024 Preliminary Budget as Presented with addition of a Certified BCBA across the district, 3 Kindergarten Aides at Boylston Elementary School, and an additional Assistant Principal at Tahanto for the Middle School. Mrs. Lee seconds.**

**Vote: 6-0. Motion Passes.**

**Mrs. Grill makes a motion to accept Errors & Deficiencies (E&D) as presented; Mrs. Degliaberti seconds.**

**Vote: 6-0. Motion Passes.**

**Mrs. Degliaberti makes a motion to send a letter of resolution regarding special education costs to our state representatives after updating language to include in-district services. Mrs. Lee seconds.**

**Vote: 6-0. Motion Passes.**

**VII. School Committee Comments / Future Agenda Items**

- Next Regularly Scheduled Meetings:
  - Apr 4, 2023